

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY S/PRS: JHTRATTNER:MG

APPROVED BY S/PRS - ROBERT L. FUNSETH

S/S -JLHOGANSON

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

UNCLAS STATE 123323 TOSEC 020041

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: SOPN (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING SUMMARY, MAY 27, 1975

FOR AMBASSADOR ANDERSON FROM FUNSETH, S/PRS

NO. 4

TUESDAY PRESS BRIEFING DEALT CHIEFLY WITH SITUATION AND DEVELOPMENTS IN LAOS. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS, ACTING SPOKESMAN FUNSETH SAID:

-- AID COMPOUND IN VIENTIANE: OUR CHARGE IN VIENTIANE REPORTS HE IS HOPEFUL, AFTER LONG NEGOTIATIONS, THAT AGREEMENT HAS BEEN REACHED WITH LAO AUTHORITIES PERMITTING US TO RETURN TO AID COMPOUND MAY 28.

OCCUPATION OF COMPOUND BY DEMONSTRATORS HAD EFFECTIVELY HALTED OUR AID OPERATION. WE WANT TO PAY OUR LAO AID EMPLOYEES BUT OCCUPATION OF COMPOUND, AS WE HAVE TOLD LAO AUTHORITIES, MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO MAKE OUT PAYROLL.

-- FUTURE OF AID PROGRAM IN LAOS: RECALLED THAT WE HAVE AGREED DISSOLVE AID ORGANIZATION IN LAOS AT UNCLASSIFIED

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REQUEST OF LAO GOVERNMENT, AND HAVE ALREADY CLOSED

AID PROVINCIAL OFFICES AND WITHDRAWN EMPLOYEES FROM THOSE OFFICES. WE HAVE NOT REACHED ANY UNDERSTANDING WITH LAO

GOVERNMENT ABOUT FUTURE LEVEL OF OUR AID, BUT WILL BE TALKING WITH THEM ABOUT FUTURE AID PROGRAM AND FORM IT WILL TAKE.

-- WITHDRAWAL OF AMERICANS: AS OF TUESDAY EVENING LAO TIME, ABOUT 260 OFFICIAL AMERICANS, INCLUDING DEPENDENTS, REMAINED IN LAOS, ALL IN VIENTIANE. NO DECISION HAS BEEN MADE ON NUMBER OF AMERICANS TO BE LEFT IN VIENTIANE BECAUSE SIZE OF STAFF MUST ULTIMATELY REFLECT NATURE AND LEVEL OF ITS WORK, WHICH IN TURN RELATES TO OUTCOME OF TALKS WITH LAOTIANS ON KIND OF AID PROGRAM WE WILL HAVE.

OTHER SUBJECTS:

-- VIETNAMESE EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON FUNSETH CONFIRMED THAT DEPARTMENT HAS TAKEN OVER AND HAS CUSTODY OF SVN EMBASSY. QUESTION OF FORMER AMERICAN EMBASSY AND PROPERTY IN SAIGON, AND DISPOSITION OF SVN EMBASSY HERE, IS UNDER CONSIDERATION AND STUDY.

-- TANZANIA: AMERICAN AMBASSADOR THERE IS IN CONTINUING CONTACT WITH TANZANIAN GOVERNMENT TO SEE IF RELEASE OF THREE PERSONS STILL HELD CAN BE OBTAINED.

-- MIDDLE EAST: POLAKOFF OF THE JEWISH TELEGRAPH AGENCY ASKED IN LIGHT OF THE SECRETARY'S REFERENCE TO SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 242, IS THE ROGERS PLAN DEAD OR ALIVE -- WHAT HAS THE SECRETARY BEEN UP TO NOW? FUNSETH REPLIED THAT BOTH THE PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY HAVE SAID THAT OUR MIDDLE EAST POLICY IS BEING REASSESSED AND THAT THIS REASSESSMENT IS NOT GOING TO BE COMPLETED UNTIL AFTER THE PRESIDENT HAS MET WITH PRESIDENT SADAT AND PM RABIN. TO POLAKOFF'S PERSISTENT QUESTIONING WHETHER THE ROGERS PLAN IS NOW INCLUDED IN THE REASSESSMENT, FUNSETH REPLIED THAT THE REASSESSMENT IS AS THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE HAVE DESCRIBED IT.

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